AMENDMENTS

In the Claims:

Please amend the following claims to read as follows:

220. (Amended) A method of selecting samples from a supply of human biological samples comprising selecting from said supply those samples which comprise a first polynucleotide that is capable of hybridizing under stringent conditions to a second polynucleotide that comprises a contiguous sequence of at least 15 nucleotides from the genome of a hepatitis C virus genome or the complement thereof.

221. (Amended) A method of selecting samples from a supply of human biological samples comprising selecting from said supply those samples which do not comprise a first polynucleotide that is capable of hybridizing under stringent conditions to a second polynucleotide that comprises a contiguous sequence of at least 15 nucleotides from the genome of a hepatitis C virus genome or the complement thereof.

222. (Amended) A method of selecting samples from a supply of human biological samples comprising selecting from said supply those samples which comprise a first polynucleotide that is capable of hybridizing under stringent conditions to a second polynucleotide that comprises a contiguous sequence of at least 15 nucleotides from either strand of at least one of the HCV cDNA inserts in a lambda gt-11 cDNA library deposited as ATCC No. 40394.

223. (Amended) A method of selecting samples from a supply of human biological samples comprising selecting from said supply those samples which do not comprise a first polynucleotide that is capable of hybridizing under stringent conditions to a second polynucleotide that comprises a contiguous sequence of at least 15 nucleotides from either strand of at least one of the HCV cDNA inserts in a lambda gt-11 cDNA library deposited as ATCC No. 40394.

224. (Amended) A method of selecting samples from a supply of human biological samples comprising selecting from said supply those samples which comprise a first

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polynucleotide that is capable of hybridizing under stringent conditions to a second polynucleotide that comprises a contiguous sequence of at least 15 nucleotides found in Figure 89, or the complement thereof.

225. (Amended) A method of selecting samples from a supply of human biological samples comprising selecting from said supply those samples which do not comprise a first polynucleotide that is capable of hybridizing under stringent conditions to a second polynucleotide that comprises a contiguous sequence of at least 15 nucleotides found in Figure 89, or the complement thereof.

226. (Amended) A method of selecting samples from a supply of human biological samples comprising selecting from said supply those samples which comprise a first polynucleotide that is capable of hybridizing under stringent conditions to a second polynucleotide that comprises a contiguous sequence of at least 15 nucleotides found in either strand of Figure 58.

227. (Amended) A method of selecting samples from a supply of human biological samples comprising selecting from said supply those samples which do not comprise a first polynucleotide that is capable of hybridizing under stringent conditions to a second polynucleotide that comprises a contiguous sequence of at least 15 nucleotides found in either stand of Figure 58.

228. (Amended) A method according to any of claims 220, 222, 224, or 226 wherein said selected samples comprise said first polynucleotide and said stringent conditions permit the formation of a stable hybrid duplex between said first polynucleotide and said contiguous sequence of nucleotides and do not permit the formation of a stable duplex between said contiguous sequence and the genomes of Hepatitis B or Hepatitis A viruses.

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229. (Amended) A method according to any of claims 221, 223, 225 or 227 wherein said selected samples do not comprise said first polynucleotide and said stringent conditions permit the formation of a stable hybrid duplex between said first polynucleotide and said contiguous sequence and do not permit the formation of a stable duplex between said contiguous sequence and the genomes of Hepatitis B or Hepatitis A viruses.

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230. (Amended) A method according to claim 228, wherein said stringent conditions include using 50% (w/v) formamide and washing in 5xSSC, 0.1% SDS at 55 °C.

231. (Amended) A method according to claim 229, wherein said stringent conditions include using 50% (w/v) formamide and washing in 5xSSC, 0.1% SDS at 55 °C.

Please add the following new claims:

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232. (New) A method according to claim 228 wherein said first polynucleotide is detectable in a PCR assay.

233. (New) A method according to 230, wherein said first polynucleotide is detectable in a PCR assay.

234. (New) A method according to claim 229 wherein said first polynucleotide is not detectable in a PCR assay.

235. (New) A method according to claim 231 wherein said first polynucleotide is not detectable in a PCR assay.

236. (New) A method according to any of claims 220-227 wherein said biological samples are blood.

237. (New) A method according to claim 228 wherein said biological samples are blood.

238. (New) A method according to claim 229 wherein said biological samples are blood.

239. (New) A method according to claim 230 wherein said biological samples are blood.

240. (New) A method according to claim 231 wherein said biological samples are blood.

241. (New) A method according to claim 232 wherein said biological samples are blood.

242. (New) A method according to claim 233 wherein said biological samples are blood.

243. (New) A method according to claim 234 wherein said biological samples are blood.

244. (New) A method according to claim 235 wherein said biological samples are blood.

245. (New) A method according to any of claims 220-227 wherein said biological samples are plasma.

246. (New) A method according to claim 228 wherein said biological samples are plasma.

247. (New) A method according to claim 229 wherein said biological samples are plasma.

248. (New) A method according to claim 230 wherein said biological samples are plasma.

249. (New) A method according to claim 231 wherein said biological samples are plasma.

250. (New) A method according to claim 232 wherein said biological samples are plasma.

251. (New) A method according to claim 233 wherein said biological samples are plasma.

252. (New) A method according to claim 234 wherein said biological samples are plasma.

253. (New) A method according to claim 235 wherein said biological samples are plasma.

254. (New) A method according to any of claims 220-227 wherein said biological samples are sera.

255. (New) A method according to claim 228 wherein said biological samples are sera.

256. (New) A method according to claim 229 wherein said biological samples are sera.

257. (New) A method according to claim 230 wherein said biological samples are sera.

258. (New) A method according to claim 231 wherein said biological samples are sera.

259. (New) A method according to claim 232 wherein said biological samples are sera.

260. (New) A method according to claim 233 wherein said biological samples are sera.

261. (New) A method according to claim 234 wherein said biological samples are sera.

262. (New) A method according to claim 235 wherein said biological samples are sera.

263. (New) A method according to any of claims 220, 222, 224, or 226 further comprising employing biological samples that are not selected for a preparation of blood-related products.

264. (New) A method according to claim 228 further comprising employing biological samples that are not selected for a preparation of blood-related products.

265. (New) A method according to claim 230 further comprising employing biological samples that are not selected for a preparation of blood-related products.

266. (New) A method according to claim 232 further comprising employing biological samples that are not selected for a preparation of blood-related products.

267. (New) A method according to claim 233 further comprising employing biological samples that are not selected for a preparation of blood-related products.

268. (New) A method according to any of claims 221, 223, 225, or 227 further comprising employing biological samples that are selected for a preparation of blood-related products.

269. (New) A method according to claim 229 further comprising employing biological samples that are selected for a preparation of blood-related products.

270. (New) A method according to claim 231 further comprising employing biological samples that are not selected for a preparation of blood-related products.

271. (New) A method according to claim 234 further comprising employing biological samples that are not selected for a preparation of blood-related products.

272. (New) A method according to claim 235 further comprising employing biological samples that are not selected for a preparation of blood-related products.

273. (New) A method according to any of claims 221, 223, 225 or 227 wherein said selected samples are supply samples for preparation of blood products.

274. (New) A method according to claim 229 wherein said selected samples are supply sample for preparation of blood products.

275. (New) A method according to claim 231 wherein said selected samples are supply sample for preparation of blood products.

276. (New) A method according to claim 234 wherein said selected samples are supply sample for preparation of blood products.

277. (New) A method according to claim 235 wherein said selected samples are supply sample for preparation of blood products.

278. (New) A method according to any of claims 220, 222, 224 or 226 wherein said samples that are not selected are supply samples for preparation of blood products.

279. (New) A method according to claim 228 wherein said samples that are not selected are supply samples for preparation of blood products.

280. (New) A method according to claim 230 wherein said samples that are not selected are supply samples for preparation of blood products.

281. (New) A method according to claim 232 wherein said samples that are not selected are supply samples for preparation of blood products.

282. (New) A method according to claim 233 wherein said samples that are not selected samples supply samples for preparation of blood products.

283. (New) A method of selecting samples from a supply of human biological samples comprising selecting from said supply those samples which comprise antibodies that form an antigen-antibody complex with an amino acid sequence of at least 10 contiguous amino acids encoded by a hepatitis C virus genome.

284. (New) A method of selecting samples from a supply of human biological samples comprising selecting from said supply those samples which do not comprise antibodies that form an antigen-antibody complex with an amino acid sequence of at least 10 contiguous amino acids encoded by a hepatitis C virus genome.

285. (New) A method of selecting samples from a supply of human biological samples comprising selecting from said supply those samples which comprise antibodies that form an antigen-antibody complex with an amino acid sequence of at least 10 contiguous amino acids encoded by at least one of the HCV cDNA inserts in a lambda gt-11 library deposited as ATCC Deposit No. 40394.

286. (New) A method of selecting samples from a supply of human biological samples comprising selecting from said supply those samples which do not comprise antibodies that form an antigen-antibody complex with an amino acid sequence of at least 10 contiguous amino acids encoded by at least one of the HCV cDNA inserts in a lambda gt-11 library deposited as ATCC Deposit No. 40394.

287. (New) A method of selecting samples from a supply of human biological samples comprising selecting from said supply those samples which comprise antibodies that form an antigen-antibody complex with an amino acid sequence of at least 10 contiguous amino acids found in Figure 90.

288. (New) A method of selecting samples from a supply of human biological samples comprising selecting from said supply those samples which do not comprise antibodies that form an antigen-antibody complex with an amino acid sequence of at least 10 contiguous amino acids found in Figure 90.

289. (New) A method of selecting samples from a supply of human biological samples comprising selecting from said supply those samples which comprise antibodies that form an antigen-antibody complex with an amino acid sequence of at least 10 contiguous amino acids found in Figure 62.

290. (New) A method of selecting samples from a supply of human biological samples comprising selecting from said supply those samples which do not comprise antibodies that form an antigen-antibody complex with an amino acid sequence of at least 10 contiguous amino acids found in Figure 62.

291. (New) A method according to any of claims 283, 285, 287 or 289 wherein said antibodies are detectable in an ELISA or radioimmunoassay.

292. (New) A method according to any of claims 284, 286, 288 or 290 wherein said antibodies are not detectable in an ELISA or radioimmunoassay.

293. (New) A method according to claim 291 wherein said ELISA or radioimmunoassay employs an antigen comprising said amino acid sequence made by recombinant expression.

294. (New) A method according to claim 292 wherein said ELISA or radioimmunoassay employs an antigen comprising said amino acid sequence made by recombinant expression.

295. (New) A method according to claim 293 wherein said antigen is a fusion protein.

296. (New) A method according to claim 294 wherein said antigen is a fusion protein.

297. (New) A method according to any of claims 283-290 wherein said biological samples are blood.

298. (New) A method according to claim 291 wherein said biological samples are blood.

299. (New) A method according to claim 292 wherein said biological samples are blood.

300. (New) A method according to claim 293 wherein said biological samples are blood.

301. (New) A method according to claim 294 wherein said biological samples are blood.

302. (New) A method according to any of claims 283-290 wherein said biological samples are plasma.

303. (New) A method according to claim 291 wherein said biological samples are plasma.

304. (New) A method according to claim 292 wherein said biological samples are plasma.

305. (New) A method according to claim 293 wherein said biological samples are plasma.

306. (New) A method according to claim 294 wherein said biological samples are plasma.

307. (New) A method according to any of claims 283-290 wherein said biological samples are sera.

308. (New) A method according to claim 291 wherein said biological samples are sera.

309. (New) A method according to claim 292 wherein said biological samples are sera.

310. (New) A method according to claim 293 wherein said biological samples are sera.

311. (New) A method according to claim 294 wherein said biological samples are sera.

312. (New) A method according to any of claims 283, 285, 287 or 289 further comprising employing biological samples that are not selected for a preparation of blood-related products.

313. (New) A method according to claim 291 further comprising employing biological samples that are not selected for a preparation of blood-related products.

314. (New) A method according to claim 293 further comprising employing biological samples that are not selected for a preparation of blood-related products.

315. (New) A method according to any of claims 284, 286, 288 or 290 further comprising employing biological samples that are selected for a preparation of blood-related products.

316. (New) A method according to claim 292 further comprising employing biological samples that are selected for a preparation of blood-related products.

317. (New) A method according to claim 294 further comprising employing biological samples that are selected for a preparation of blood-related products.

318. (New) A method according to any of claims 283, 285, 287 or 289 wherein said selected samples are supply samples for preparation of polyclonal antibodies.

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319. (New) A method according to claim 291 wherein said selected samples are supply samples for preparation of polyclonal antibodies.

320. (New) A method according to claim 293 wherein said selected samples are supply samples for preparation of polyclonal antibodies.

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321. (New) A method according to any of claim 284, 286, 288 or 290 wherein said selected samples are supply samples for preparation of blood products.

322. (New) A method according to claim 292 wherein said selected samples are supply samples for preparation of blood products.

323. (New) A method according to claim 294 wherein said selected samples are supply samples for preparation of blood products.

324. (New) The method according to any of claims 283, 285, 287 or 289 wherein the selected samples comprise antibodies that form an antigen-antibody complex with an amino acid sequence of less than about 100 contiguous amino acids encoded by a hepatitis C virus genome.

325. (New) The method according to any of claims 283, 285, 287 or 289 wherein the selected samples comprise antibodies that form an antigen-antibody complex with an amino acid sequence of less than about 100 contiguous amino acids encoded by an HCV cDNA insert in the lambda gt-11 library deposited as ATCC deposit No. 40394.

326. (New) The method according to any of claims 283, 285, 287 or 289 wherein the selected samples comprise antibodies that form an antigen-antibody complex with an amino acid sequence of less than about 100 contiguous amino acids found in Figure 90.

327. (New) A method according to any of claims 283, 285, 287 or 289 wherein the contiguous sequence is found within the sequence selected from the group consisting of: AA1-AA50; AA1-AA84; AA9-AA177; AA1-AA120; AA35-AA45; AA50-AA100; AA40-AA90; AA65-AA75; AA80-AA90; AA99-AA120; AA95-AA110; AA100-AA150; AA150-AA200; AA200-AA250; AA220-AA240; AA245-AA265; AA250-AA300; AA290-AA330; AA290-AA305; AA300-AA350; AA310-AA330; AA350-AA400; AA405-AA495; AA400-AA450; AA437-AA582; AA450-AA500; AA475-AA495; AA500-AA550; AA511-AA690; AA515-AA550; AA550-AA600; AA550-AA625; AA575-AA605; AA600-AA650; AA600-AA625; AA635-AA665; AA650-AA700; AA645-AA680; AA700-AA750; AA700-AA725; AA725-AA775; AA770-AA790; AA750-AA800; AA800-AA815; AA850-AA875; AA800-AA850; AA920-AA990; AA850-AA900; AA920-AA945; AA940-AA965; AA950-AA1000; AA1000-AA1060; AA1000-AA1050; AA1025-AA1040; AA1075-AA1175; AA1000AA1060;

AA1000-AA1050; AA1025-AA1040; AA1075-AA1175; AA1050-AA1200; AA1070-AA1100; AA1100-AA1140; AA1192-AA1457; AA1195-AA1250; AA1200-AA1225; AA1225-AA1250; AA1250-AA1300; AA1260-AA1310; AA1260-AA1280; AA1266-AA1428; AA1300-AA1350; AA1310-AA1340; AA1345-AA1405; AA1350-AA1400; AA1365-AA1380; AA1380-AA1405; AA1400-AA1450; AA1450-AA1500; AA1475-AA1500; AA1500-AA1550; AA1515-AA1550; AA1550-AA1600; AA1569-AA1931; AA1570-AA1590; AA1595-AA1610; AA1590-AA1650; AA1610-AA1645; AA1650-AA1690; AA1685-AA1770; AA1689-AA1805; AA1690-AA1720; AA1694-AA1735; AA1720-AA1745; AA1745-AA1770; AA1750-AA1800; AA1775-AA1810; AA1795-AA1850; AA1850-AA1900; AA1900-AA1950; AA1900-AA1920; AA1916-AA2021; AA1920-AA1940; AA1949-AA2124; AA1950-AA2000; AA1950-AA1985; AA2000-AA2050; AA2020-AA2045; AA2045-AA2100; AA2045-AA2070; AA2054-AA2223; AA2070-AA2100; AA2100-AA2150; AA2150-AA2220; AA2200-AA2345; AA2250-AA2330; AA2265-AA2280; AA2280-AA2290; AA2287-AA2385; AA2300-AA2350; AA2350-AA2400; AA2345-AA2415; AA2345-AA2375; AA2348-AA2464; AA2370-AA2410; AA2400-AA2450; AA2400-AA2425; AA2415-AA2450; AA2445-AA2500; AA2471-AA2502; AA2500-AA2550; AA2505-AA2540; AA2550-AA2600; AA2560-AA2580; AA2600-AA2650; AA2620-AA2650; AA2650-AA2700; AA2655-AA2670; AA2670-AA2700; AA2700-AA2750; AA2750-AA2800; AA2755-AA2780; AA2780-AA2830; AA2785-AA2810; AA2796-AA2886; AA2810-AA2825; AA2800-AA2850; AA2850-AA2900; AA2900-AA2950; AA2910-AA2930; and AA2925-AA2950,

wherein the contiguous amino acid sequence is depicted according to the formula AA_x-AA_y, x and y denoting amino acid numbers HCV-1 polyprotein or corresponding regions of other HCV isolates.

328. (New) The method according to any of claims 324-327 wherein said antibodies are detectable in an ELISA or radioimmunoassay.

329. (New) The method according to claim 328 wherein said ELISA or radioimmunoassay employs an antigen comprising said amino acid sequence made by recombinant expression.

330. (New) The method according to claim 328 wherein said biological samples are blood.

331. (New) The method according to claim 329 wherein said biological samples are blood.

332. (New) The method according to claim 328 wherein said biological samples are sera.

333. (New) The method according to claim 329 wherein said biological samples are sera.

334. (New) The method according to claim 328 wherein said biological samples are plasma.

335. (New) The method according to claim 329 wherein said biological samples are plasma.

336. (New) A method according to any of claims 324-327 wherein the contiguous sequence is found within the sequence selected from the group consisting of: AA1-AA84; AA37-AA582; AA511-AA690; AA9-AA177; AA1192-AA1457; AA1266-AA1428; AA1694-AA1735; AA1689-AA1805; AA1916-AA2021; AA1949-AA2124; AA2054-AA2223; AA2200-AA3325; AA2287-AA2385; AA2348-AA2464; AA2371-AA2502; AA2796-AA2886; AA1569-AA1931,
wherein the contiguous amino acid sequence is depicted according to the formula AA_x-AA_y, x and y denoting amino acid numbers HCV-1 polyprotein or corresponding regions of other HCV isolates.

337. (New) The method according to claim 336 wherein said antibodies are detectable in an ELISA or radioimmunoasssay.

338. (New) The method according to claim 337 wherein said ELISA or radioimmunoassay employs an antigen comprising said amino acid sequence made by recombinant expression.

339. (New) The method according to claim 337 wherein said biological samples are blood.

340. (New) The method according to claim 338 wherein said biological samples are blood.

341. (New) The method according to claim 337 wherein said biological samples are plasma.

342. (New) The method according to claim 338 wherein said biological samples are plasma.

343. (New) The method according to claim 337 wherein said biological samples are sera.

344. (New) The method according to claim 338 wherein said biological samples are sera.

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